ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SELECTMEN, OVERSEERS OF POOR,

AND ASSESSORS

OF THE

Town of Northfield

TOGETHER WITH THE REPORTS OF THE

SCHOOL COMMITTEE,

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

AND

TOWN TREASURER.

FOR THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 15th, 1886.

TURNERS FALLS, MASS.:
Turners Falls Reporter Steam Printing House, Cecil T. Bagnall, Proprietor.
1886.

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PREFACE.

With the close of another business year, it becomes the duty of your Selectmen to again render to you an account of their stewardship in the management of the public trusts you have committed to their charge, and which we present to you in our report herewith.

The last report of our predecessors stated the virtual balance against the Town to be over $900. The unusual and great damage to our highways and bridges at the Farms and throughout the Town by the heavy showers during the summer of 1884 and the necessary expenditure of nearly $2000, in the required repairs, clearly forced this balance against the Town. The payment of this unlooked for indebtedness, together with the purchase of, and adjustment of, the school house values, necessitated the past year an unusual and burdensome high rate of taxation. Your appropriations at your last annual meeting were so liberal as to enable us to meet the required expenses of the Town with a sum considerable less than you voted to raise, and thus to change the condition of the Town from a balance of $900 against it, in February, 1885, to a balance of ~~$1000 in favor of the Town~~ $475.81 at the present time. In view of this, we feel constrained to congratulate ourselves and the Town upon the present good condition of its finances, and as the past year completed the three years taken by the town in which to pay for the school houses, we see no reason why, with our ordinary and usual expenses, the rate of taxation the coming year should not be materially reduced.

ASSESSOR'S REPORT.

Value of Real Estate, May 1, 1885,		$560,095 00
" Personal Property, May 1, 1885,		64,651 00
		$624,746 00
No of acres of land assessed,	19,716	
" Dwelling Houses, assessed,	373	
" Horses assessed,	371	
" Cows, "	564	
" Sheep, "	604	
" Polls, "	435	

TOWN ASSESSMENT FOR 1885.

Raised and Appropriated for Schools,		$2200 00
"	Repairs,	206 00
"	Carrying scholars,	150 00
"	⅓ of school houses,	3775 00
"	Contingent expenses,	2000 00
"	Highways,	1800 00
"	Memorial Services,	50 00
"	Carney Hospital,	25 00
"	Library,	160 00
"	State tax,	615 00
"	County tax,	1090 64
Overlay,		79 78
		$12,145 42

AMOUNT RAISED BY TAX.

On Polls,	$870 00	
On Property,	11275 42	
		$12145 42

Rate per cent., $18.00 per $1000.
Tax on each Poll, $2.00.

L. T. WEBSTER,
GEO. F. ALEXANDER,
GEORGE J. BACON,
} ASSESSORS OF NORTHFIELD.

EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR OF HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES.

Amount worked and credited on taxes,	$676 88
Paid Harry M. Howe,	3 13
R. K. Caldwell, team,	4 00
H. H. Johnson,	2 40
Sumner L. Gates and team,	13 40
Henry W. Webster, scraper work,	92 00
Thomas Quinlan, " "	79 20
Wm. H. Doolittle,	2 25
James N. Caldwell,	4 23
Ezra L. Holton,	2 55
E. J. Blanchard,	5 36
Elsworth W. Barber,	8 25
A. G. Hale and team,	51 47
Isaac Murdock,	7 35
John H. Robbins,	10 75
Merrill M. Moore and team,	26 95
Stephen Keet, work and lumber,	3 00
J. A. Holland,	2 25
Frank Farnsworth, with team,	3 15
Frank W. Piper,	5 85
Alonzo Shepardson,	7 80
Otis T. Greenleaf, with team,	23 70
Henry C. Holton, with team,	11 33
Joseph W. Park,	9 75
Pitts W. Preston, team,	38 25
Ansel Field, with team,	25 85
J. Alfred Lyman, with team,	3 20
Frank Whithead,	12 00
W. W. Merriman,	2 10
Ansel Stimpson,	3 15
H. B. Allen,	60
John P. Wentworth,	1 80
Fred R. Clough and team,	38 75
Fred R. Clough, use of plow,	3 00
Winsor Morgan,	1 50
Landman Nye,	75

Fred H. Simonds,	3 75
James Allen,	3 75
Amos Whitaker,	5 55
Jerry Twine and team,	2 80
L. W. Brown,	4 00
H. R. Crowell,	3 75
Dwight L. Preston,	6 75
Henry Wright, timber for bridge,	20 00
Henry Wright, stone, "	1 00
Henry Wright, work on bridge,	9 00
Chas. Sanford,	1 50
Chas. X. Janes,	10 85
Samuel K. Sawyer,	8 25
Joel Randall,	5 55
A. C. Parsons,	21 79
George R. Stebbens,	3 00
James Barry,	3 00
Charles Parker,	3 00
Ed. C. Rugg, blasting,	2 50
John Grace,	1 50
H. C. Field,	45
Frank Whitaker,	3 00
Mr. Clay,	1 35
Clinton A. Ware, team,	3 60
Harris Simond,	50
L. C. Miller, team,	1 80
Frank V. Woods, drawing stone,	12 00
M. C. Miller, "	23 40
Amos Bigelow and team,	24 00
Samuel Ruggles,	5 10
Wm. H. Stratton,	1 53
Samuel G. Pratt,	60
Albert Whitaker,	2 25
Henry W. Montague,	6 85
Thomas Metcalf and team,	13 00
Oscar Wood and team,	2 00
E. C. Nash,	5 25
Samuel Stickney, team,	3 00
J. L. Hammond,	1 50
Lyman Gilbert,	90

Horace F. Field,	2 35
Mr. Oaks,	1 35
Wm. W. Darling,	1 50
O. L. Leach,	1 50
Geo. E. Clough, team,	12 00
Henry W. Stimpson, shovelling snow,	4 65
Elisha A. Smith,	6 02
C. A. Smith,	1 68
Sumner H. Collar,	3 26
Benjamin Davis,	75
C. Davis,	78
S. L. Pike,	45
George W. Browning,	5 37
F. A. Hilliard,	3 15
William Whitaker,	15
Wallis Morgan,	4 12
Melvin Collar,	15
L. B. Robbins,	45
M. Duniken,	30
J. B. Putney,	4 53
Wm. Dawson,	1 19
Charles Bass,	3 44
Henry Dresser,	2 31
Henry Hammond,	15
Henry Wright, 2d,	3 40
Clarence Moody,	1 80
Adolphus L. Hale,	2 60
Darius Dickinson,	2 20
David Long, team,	3 20
Rufus Philips,	1 05
Peter McHugh,	90
Henry Lyman,	75
F. G. Morgan,	25
Frank V. Doolittle, stone for culvert,	38 33
Jona. Lyman, building culvert at Farms,	340 00
Francis Fisher, blasting stone,	2 10
James Campbell, new road,	13 50
John Grace, "	13 50
Chas. Blanchard, "	14 62
Timothy Crelan, "	13 50

David Dale, new road,		13 50
John Dale, "		6 75
Thos. Quinlan, " team,		51 50
Henry Webster, "		36 00
Charles Osgood, stone, new road,		5 00
George F. Pentecost, stone new road,		25 00
Alvin A. Long,		18 00
Charles Pomeroy, team,		15 00
Jona. Lyman, rebuilding abutment,		42 50
		$2147 90
Less cost completing new road to bridge,	$226 20	
Less cost of culvert at Farms,	340 00	
Less stone work, Pine Meadow bridge,	42 50	
		$608 70
Amount expended for ordinary repairs,		$1539 20

CONTINGENT EXPENSES.

Paid James T. Cummings, painting guide boards,	$4 00
Lyman Brothers, goods and work,	9 31
R. C. Ward, services as Selectman,	3 25
S. G. Wilds, " "	2 25
R. C. Fisher, repair roof town house,	3 00
George A. Stearns, building boat at Munn's ferry,	270 00
B. F. Streeter, 4 cords wood, town house,	17 00
Cecil T. Bagnall, printing town reports,	30 40
Grand Army Post, per town vote,	50 00
Francis Labonte, of Leicester, state aid,	32 00
Addison Tanner, land damage,	27 50
Expenses burial Charles Morgan,	7 00
W. F. Prindle, drain pipe,	30 80
Dwight Cook, of Montague, state aid,	32 00
Geo. F. Pentecost, abatement poll tax,	2 00
Mrs. Cyntha Colton, abatement on personal tax,	6 20
S. House, rebate tax of Morris Conner,	1 23

W. E. Webster, insurance on town house,	30 00
A. C. Parsons & Son, cement,	13 00
Chas. Pomeroy, abatement tax on Perry farm,	3 95
Henry Johnson's heirs, " " "	3 95
Conant & Conant, advice to board of registrars of voters,	5 00
M. M. Pomeroy, printing lists of voters,	4 00
Geo. Tyler, points for road scraper,	12 00
Allen & Cowles, for stone,	1 25
Elisha Alexander, repairing tools,	2 60
Tax bills and collector's book,	2 35
Fred A. Thomas, repairing scraper,	2 70
Sackett Brothers, drain pipe,	36 90
H. B. Parker, supporting water trough,	2 00
E. J. Blanchard, " "	3 00
H. W. Webster, " "	5 00
Ansel Stimpson, " "	4 00
Estate, S. A. Field, rent of water,	5 00
Aqueduct Company, "	10 00
L. H. Sprague, error of assessment tax,	1 62
Henry C. Holton, mowing cemetery,	1 50
Henry Wright, " "	7 00
Lucius Stimpson, " "	1 50
Sumner H. Collar, " "	2 00
Charles Pomeroy, posts for railing,	3 75
A. G. Hale, timber for bridge,	2 00
Henry C. Holton, bridge plank,	1 56
A. G. Hale, 2250 ft. " "	36 00
Mrs. Elizabeth Howard, 2300 ft. bridge plank,	36 80
Samuel K. Sawyer, 1713 ft. " "	25 69
Judah Nash, 1324 ft. " "	18 54
Geo. F. Alexander, 554 ft. " "	7 54
L. T. Webster, 369 ft. " "	5 55
Library committee for purchase of books,	100 00
Salary, Librarian,	60 00
Incidental expenses of Library,	15 00
E. W. Cotton, running town lines,	18 00
Jonathan Stimpson, abatement of tax in part,	2 25
C. W. Reed, laying drain pipe,	4 85

Wright Stratton, services as collector,	40 00
" " posting Town warrants, etc.,	8 00
" " services as Town officer,	10 00
" " discount on taxes,	283 60
" " abatement taxes assessed '85,	31 12
R. K. Caldwell, " " " '84,	17 45
Henry Wright, care of Town clock,	15 00
" " " " hall,	37 00
" " burial permits,	5 75
" " driving hearse,	37 00
Elias Lyman, services as Town Clerk,	36 95
" " expenses and expresses of Town Clerk,	18 84
" " services as Treasurer,	40 00
" " sundry expenses as Treasurer,	12 50
Printing Town orders,	2 50
Drawing drain tile,	2 75
E. E. Russell, repairs at Town house,	75
W. M. Moore, repairs of Jury box,	2 00
L. T. Webster, paints, hardware, etc., per store account,	33 66
L. T. Webster, care and feeding 100 tramps during year,	25 25
W. Stratton, abatement taxes, 1883,	57 58
Total,	$1,743 49

EXPENSES INCURRED ON ACCOUNT OF POOR.

Jerusha Doolittle,		
Paid Henry Wright, 2d, to Feb. 22, 1886,		$117 00
Lucretia Sawyer.		
Paid Henry Wright, to Feb. 22, 1886,		117 00
Mrs. Amy Marsh.		
Paid Henry Wright, to Feb. 22, 1886,		51 10
Susannah Grout.		
Paid Henry Wright, to Feb. 22, 1886,		54 00
Charles Lord.		
Paid L. T. Webster, shoes, clothing, &c.,		7 80
Paid Frank V. Doolittle, to Feb. 1, 1886,		73 28
Lorenzo B. Putney.		
Paid Mrs. John B. Putney,		44 70
Dwight Cook of Montague.		
Paid T. B. Stratton, groceries,	$9 00	
" Overseers of Montague,	12 50	
" Dr. A. V. Bowker, medical attd'ce,	9 50	
		29 00
Mrs. John Cutting and 3 children, Holyoke.		
Paid Overseers of Poor, Holyoke, rent, medicines,		69 50
Mrs. Sally Elmer.		
Paid A. D. Elmer, $1.00 per week,		52 16
Mrs. Ellen O'Keefe.		
Paid $1.00 per week from Sept. 26,		20 00
Mrs. Margaret Ragan.		
Paid H. R. Crowell, groceries and goods from store,		28 00

Francis Labonte and family, Leicester.		
Paid Overseers of the Poor, Leicester, aid,		11 00
Mrs. Electa Stratton, Erving.		
Paid $1 per week since Aug. 1, 1885,		26 26
Mrs. Kempland, Bernardston.		
Paid Dr. W. H. Pierce, Bernardston, medical attendance,		37 75
Dr. C. H. Howard, medical attendance,		2 50
Paid for meal & groceries, Abram Richards,		7 20
L. T. Webster, groceries and necessaries, Geo. Tatro, state pauper,		7 05
H. W. Webster, for flour and meal, sundry poor, per order,		3 43
L. T. Webster, for aid to Peter Dwyer & family state paupers,		48 50
L. T. Webster, cash expense on account of poor as per bill,		10 41
Charles E. Morgan.		
Paid Northampton Hospital to time of descease,		98 54
Mary Pierson.		
Catherine Hamill.		
Paid Worcester Hospital, to Jan. 1, '86,		431 41
		$1349 57

Received and due on account of payments as above:		
Paid by R. K. Caldwell, guardian Mary Pierson,	$59 49	
By R. K. Caldwell, guardian Lucretia Sawyer,	60 00	
By State Treasurer, aid to Geo. Tatro,	7 05	
Due from Erving and Wendell, aid to Peter Dyer,	48 50	
		$175 04
Net expense for poor for year,		$1172 53

SCHOOL EXPENSES.

SCHOOL NO. 1.

Paid Emma Rhood, teaching and board,	$178 50	
Isabel S. Childs, " "	168 00	
Charles L. Arlin, care of school room,	15 25	
John Canfield, cleaning " "	8 50	
Mary and Maggie Grace, care, "	10 50	
N. E. Priest, repairs,	3 25	
Lyman Brothers, repairs and goods,	5 50	
Thomas Quinlan, 11½ cords wood,	51 75	
		$441 25

SCHOOL NO 2.

Paid Gertrude C. Mattoon, teaching and board,	$247 85	
D. Everett Lyman, care, repairs, house,	15 60	
A. G. Miner, blinds,	3 75	
A. C. Parsons, paints and oils,	18 86	
Frank H. Turner, painting school house,	22 80	
Charles H. Stearns, repairs, "	1 00	
Michael Pigott, wood,	1 00	
Thomas Quinlan, wood, 4⅛ cords,	18 56	
		$329 42

SCHOOL NO. 3.

Paid Minnie Atherton, teaching and board,	$157 50	
Miss W. D. Atherton, teaching and board,	37 50	
Geo. E. Nye, care of school room,	5 25	
Michael Cosgrove, cleaning school room,	2 00	
Ansel Field, 4¼ cords, wood,	18 00	
		$220 25

SCHOOL NO. 4.

Paid Mrs. G. M. Starkweather, teaching and board,	$176 35	
Abby and Carrie Barrett, care school room,	6 75	
J. F. May, repairs,	2 90	
		$186 00

SCHOOL NO. 5.

Paid Ella M. Parker, teaching and board,	$175 00	
" " care school room,	8 10	
Lucius Stimpson, cleaning school room,	1 50	
Wm. W. Merriman, 2 cords wood,	9 00	
		193 60

SCHOOL NO. 6.

Paid Ida Parks, teaching and board,	$60 00	
" " care school room,	3 00	
Jennie S. Pierce, teaching and board,	102 00	
" " care school room,	5 10	
O. T. Greenleaf, cleaning school room,	2 00	
" " repairs,	5 00	
Sumner H. Collar, carrying scholars,	15 00	
Frank Harness, " "	30 00	
		$222 10

SCHOOL NO. 7.

Paid Mrs. Cora B. Preston, teaching and board,	$247 00	
Mrs. Cora B. Preston, care school room,	6 50	
Chas. B. Manchester, building fires,	3 00	
Pickett Brothers, 4½ cords wood,	20 25	
S. L. Gates, 1 cord wood, fitted for stove,	4 00	
Everett Lyman, repairs school house,	5 68	
		$286 43

SCHOOL NO. 9.

Paid Lena F. Lee, teaching and board,	$157 50	
Lena F. Lee, care of school room,	4 50	
Mrs. Thos. Grace, cleaning school room,	5 50	
Sherman Bartlett, care school room,	1 25	
Alexander Holton, 4½ cords wood,	20 00	
		$188 75

Paid Lyman Brothers, stove and pipe,	11 50
L. T. Webster, care school supplies,	6 00
Boston School Supply Co., school books,	119 57
Cooperthwait & Co.,	111 80
	$2316 67

CLASSIFICATION.

Total paid teachers,	$1707 20	
Paid care and cleaning school rooms,	88 70	
Repairs school houses,	84 34	
Furnishing room stove,	11 50	
School books,	231 37	
Carrying scholars,	45 00	
32 cords wood,	142 56	
Express and care school books,	6 00	
		$2316 67

SELECTMEN'S FINANCIAL REPORT.

Selectmen, in account with the Town of Northfield.

	Dr.	
To orders drawn of Treasurer during year,	$6,814 87	
Received of Henry Wright, rent of town hall,	67 00	
		$6,881 87

	Cr.	
By paid R. C. Ward, Selectman,	$136 25	
" Geo. F. Alexander, "	99 25	
" S. G. Wilds, "	98 75	
" Warren J. Wright, School Com.,	59 38	
" J. B. Callender, "	55 00	
" Chas. Pomeroy, Auditor,	2 00	
" L. T. Webster, "	2 00	
" R. K. Caldwell, "	2 00	
" C. L. Robbins, Regis'r of Voters,	15 00	
" T. J. Field, " "	17 50	
" C. A. Ware, " "	15 00	
" Elias Lyman, " "	15 00	
" Ordinary repairs of highways,	1471 02	
" For schools,	2316 67	
" For support of poor,	817 62	
" Public Library,	175 00	
" Contingent expenses,	1568 49	
" Outstanding orders to balance,	15 94	
		$6,881 87

L. T. WEBSTER,
GEO. F. ALEXANDER,
GEORGE J. BACON,
} Selectmen of Northfield.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

Elias Lyman, Treasurer, in account with Town of Northfield,

Feb. 15, 1886.

	Dr.
To cash on hand, Feb. 21, 1885,	$811 95
Rec'd W. Stratton, tax, '83,	68 53
" R. K. Caldwall, tax, '84,	601 69
" W. Stratton, tax, '85,	6873 53
" Selectmen, loan,	1200 00
" State Treas., corporation tax,	1070 35
" " Nat'l Bank tax,	390 18
" " State aid,	84 00
" " " School fund,	214 07
" " Support of State paupers,	7 05
" On account Mary Pierson,	59 49
" " Lucretia Sawyer,	60 00
" Dividend on Insurance Policy,	31 50
" Liquor license,	100 00
" Dog fund,	118 00
" Rent of hall at Farms,	6 00
" Town of Erving, tuition,	3 00
" Auctioneer's license,	2 00
" Interest on surplus revenue,	12 00
" Town of Warwick,	1 50
" " " Vernon, Vt.,	1 75
" " " Bernardston,	1 13
" " " Winchester, N. H.,	1 00
" " " Hinsdale, "	25
	$11,718 97

EXPENDITURES.

	Cr.	
Cash Paid on outstanding orders,	$65 49	
Selectmen orders,	6814 87	
County tax,	1090 62	
State aid,	146 00	
State tax,	615 00	
District No. 1 Note,	800 00	
Interest on District Note,	32 22	
Interest at Greenfield Savings Bank,	66 80	
Interest on temporary loans,	32 00	
Northampton Lunatic Hospital,	98 54	
Worcester Lunatic Hospital,	431 41	
Carney Hospital,	25 00	
State Treas., ¼ liquor license,	25 00	
Cash on hand Feb. 15, 1886,	1478 02	
		$11,718 97

Approved,

R. K. CALDWELL, } Auditing
H. C. PARSONS, } Committee.

FINANCIAL CONDITION OF THE TOWN.

FEB. 15, 1886.

Cash in treasury as per settlement,	$1478 02
Due from collector, tax 1885,	1598 63
Deposit in bank by the county on account of Millers River bridge,	200 00
Due for support of Peter Dyer,	48 50
Due from town of Gill on account of ferries,	68 00
	$3393 15

DUE AS PER AUDITORS' REPORT.

L. T. Webster, selectman,	$87 75	
Geo. F. Alexander, "	68 25	
George J. Bacon, "	102 00	
Warren J. Wright, school committee,	65 87	
J. B. Callender, "	50 75	
H. C. Parsons, auditor,	2 00	
R. K. Caldwell, "	2 00	
Outstanding orders,	15 44	
Money borrowed for town,	$1200 00	
Due on account schools not closed,	675 00	
" " ~~of poor and sundry bills not presented,~~	1620 00	3869.06
a Savings Bank	———	~~$2394 06~~
Balance ~~in favor of~~ against the town,	475.91	~~$999 10~~

L. T. WEBSTER,
GEO. F. ALEXANDER,
GEORGE J. BACON,
} Selectmen of Northfield.

REPORT OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE OF NORTHFIELD, 1885-6.

Your Committee respectfully submit the following brief report of the condition of the schools, together with a few suggestions that the observation of the year past seems to render worthy of notice,

It would seem needless to dwell upon the importance of our schools, the ground has been gone over so many times by the ablest minds in the country, and it cannot be possible that any intelligent citizen can ignore the subject or fail to appreciate its vast importance.

The common school institution is the rock upon which our republic is founded, and the universal and systematic diffusion of education is the only thing that can secure perpetuity to our form of government.

A serious difficulty that our schools labor under, is one to which commonly enough allusion is made, for seldom do we read the report of a School Committee that does not contain some reference to it, more or less strongly put; still it is none the less worthy of attention at the present time in its bearing upon the success of our schools. We allude to the manifest want of practical interest in the school on the part of parents and guardians, evidenced by their lack of generous co-operation with the teacher through the various channels open to them. Do we, as parents, fully appeciate the importance of this? Your committee believe the responsibility of the parent is hardly second to that of the teacher in the success or failure of any public school. Indeed, the poor success and even the positive failure of some schools, which under different circumstances, would with the same teachers, haved proved satisfactory in their results, lies in five cases out of ten, at the door of the parents and citizens of the district. This may not seem to some a well founded statement, but the conclusion, the result of previous observation, has been abundantly corroborated by the experience of past years in many districts in our own town.

In the first place a want of punctuality in attendance on the part of the scholars interferes materially with the systematic course of recitations, and breaks in upon the order and discipline of the school. Again, the frequent absence of some scholars for a half-day or a day at a time, in some instances amounting, in the course of the term to weeks, cannot fail to have the effect of retarding the progress of the individual scholar. But,

worse than that, not only is the interest of the individual affected by his absence but by breaking up the uniformity of the classes, (oftentimes making it necessary to re-classify a portion of the school, and it may be to increase the number of classes,) by deranging the well-matured plans of the teacher, thereby taking up valuable time, it has a seriously bad influence upon the whole school.

Now is it not fair to conclude that the remedy for the above mentioned evils is in the hands of the parents to be used at their pleasure? and if so does not our responsibility, as parents, in the state of the schools seem perfectly apparent as far as these matters go? Another error into which some parents fall, of grave character and of vital importance to the well being of the school is that of directly interfering with the authority of the teacher, detracting from the dignity of her position, endangering her influence over her pupils, by thoughtless criticisms upon her methods or manner of teaching and general fault-finding with the condition of the school in the presence of the children; sometimes going so far as to sustain a child in his open resistance to the teacher or the rules.

How is it possible, we may be allowed to ask, for any teacher, no matter how well fitted for the position, when in addition to the fulfilment of her regular duties, arduous enough in themselves, she is obliged to contend with a spirit of faction and insubordination, backed up by the parents at home?

This is all wrong. The moment a child enters the school room, it is the parents' duty to yield him to the jurisdiction of the constituted authority of the school, expecting him to fulfill the duties imposed upon him, and to be subject to the rewards and punishments. It is manifestly our duty also, if we would see our school prosper, fully to sustain the authority of the teacher among the children at home, and render all the aid possible in sustaining it beyond our own fireside. If special or general objection arise to the course pursued in any school, the remedy is almost always easy and plain, in a friendly personal interview with the teacher, in which oftentimes the *ex parte* statements made by children and others, which may have given rise to the supposed objectionable feature, may be explained away, and, at any rate an opportunity for a kindly word of counsel or warning be afforded.

It is a curious fact that those who find the most fault with schools and teachers, are generally parties who take the least

pains to ascertain the real condition of things, and who rarely, if ever, visit a school to examine its condition. This course of treatment is too obviously unjust and unfair to require comment.

We have been fortunate the past year, as a general thing, in the employment of competent and faithful teachers, and in nearly every school, good degree of progress has been made in consequence.

We would call attention, however, to the fact that the schools of No. 1 have become over-crowded and unweildy, the scholars varying very much in age, capacity and acquirement. A necessity seems to exist for a change in the arrangement thereof. There should be in these schools, to do justice to ourselves and the children, a graded school of three departments, primary, intermediate and grammar.

Of the nine schools in the town, seven will have been maintained, at the close of the winter term, 33 weeks; the two others in the mountain districts have been maintained 27 weeks each.

The repairs of our school buildings have been carefully looked after by your Committee, and the houses are generally in good condition, and in the repairs made we have used but a portion of the appropriation made for that purpose.

No vagrant or truant children have come to the knowledge of your committee the past year.

Under the new State law which compels the Town to furnish the text books for the schools, your Committee have been surprised at the extent of the demand made for books. The law, although upon its face presenting some favorable features, we deem, on the whole, to be rather injudicious than otherwise. It certainly has entailed a very great increase of care and perplexity to your Committee, and has added quite a considerable amount of taxation to the Town.

As several of our schools have not completed the school year, as this report goes to print, we are obliged to omit the little table of statistics which has usually accompanied the report.

We would recommend, in conclusion, that there be appropriated the ensuing year for schools, $2200; for repairs on school buildings, $150; and $100 to be used at the Committee's discretion for the conveyance of scholars to and from school.

JOSEPH B. CALLENDER,
WARREN J. WRIGHT,
D. EVERETT LYMAN,
} School Committee.

REPORT OF THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

FEBRUARY 15, 1886.

Number of volumes reported last year,	2630
" " purchased,	104
" " presented,	3
Total,	2737
Lost,	2
No. volumes remaining in Library,	2735

4,349 volumes have been circulated in 156 families during the past year. This is an increase over that of last report, which shows that the privileges of a Public Library are appreciated. A suitable and properly conducted reading room connected with our library, would be of inestimable value to our young men. Free access to the best papers and periodicals of the day would invite the young men to an investigation of the affairs of State, thereby the better fitting them for the responsible positions they will sooner or later be called to fill. How much more profitable for the boys, if they could, under the leadership of some competent person, be led to study the mechanism of our Government. Is it just to ask our boys to uphold the destinies of our free country, without teaching them what it is, and how best to support it? In no way could a small amount of money be so profitably expended as to provide and maintain a free reading room. Your Committee would recommend that a suitable place be provided for, and proper rules adopted for the support of a free reading room.

LIBRARY COMMITTTEE IN ACCOUNT WITH THE TOWN OF NORTHFIELD.

	Dr.
To Cash on hand, last report,	$21 22
Appropriation for new books,	100 00
" " care of Library,	75 00
Fines received,	8 36
	$204 58

1885.				Cr.
June 10,	By paid	freight on new books,		$1 06
24,	"	"	L. W. Rice, binding books,	8 00
24,	"	"	Field & Hall, for catalogues,	6 00
24,	"	"	" " paper,	3 00
July 13,	"	"	Loring, Short & Harmon,	100 00
1886.				
Feb. 15,	"	"	Nellie Holton, librarian,	60 00
"	"	"	" " as per bill,	99
"	"	"	R. C. Ward, "	10 68
"	"	"	Cash in hands of lib. com.,	14 85
				$204 58

R. C. WARD, Chairman Lib. Com.

Aproved Feb. 15, 1886,

R. K. CALDWELL, } Auditing
H. C. PARSONS, } Committee.

REPORT OF THE OVERSEERS OF THE POOR ON THE ELISHA ALEXANDER FUND.

Amount in bank, Jan. 1, 1886,		$1067 37
Drawn from bank, Feb. 13, 1886, paid as follows:	$41 62	
Widow William Stevens,	$5 00	
" Abbie Barrett,	5 00	
" Ellen O'Keefe,	5 00	
" Elijah Field,	5 00	
Daughter James M. Caldwell,	5 00	
Almira Gage,	5 00	
Widow Margaret Regan,	5 00	
Cash on hand,	6 62	
		$41 62
Amount in bank,		$1025 75

L. T. WEBSTER, } Overseers
GEORGE F. ALEXANDER, } of
GEORGE J. BACON, } The Poor.